

# **LABOR POWER**

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## **Two Labor Conventions—A.F.L. & C.I.O.**

Meeting at a time of the gravest crisis in the history of the American working class, the actions taken and the utterances made at the recent conventions of the C. I. O. and the A. F. of L. convincingly demonstrate once more the bankruptcy of what passes for an organized labor movement in the United States.

American capitalism is well on the road to open military participation in the Second World War. To protect the imperialist interests of capitalism, the Roosevelt government is preparing to clamp a totalitarian regime on the country in order to effectively carry on the struggle against its fascist rivals. In this drive the working class is the chief victim—labor must contribute both its toil and its blood to save the profits and investments of those who will, at the first opportunity, throw them out of their jobs, deny them more than the barest relief, and deprive them of all their cherished civil rights. In the face of the serious problems facing the spokesmen for labor, their failure to take the slightest action to protect the interests of the workers merits the highest condemnation.

Even the capitalist press recognized the gravity of the occasion. The *New York Post*, in commenting editorially on the conventions, stated, "The labor movement is at a critical moment, awaiting an uncertain future. The urgency of the defense program will be used, and is being used, by unscrupulous men for breaking down elementary labor safeguards and rights. Every argument that can be validly brought to bear against labor will be used. At a time like the present such arguments will have many times their normal force." The restrained language used by this capitalist sheet only serves to underscore the seriousness of the situation.

It is more imperative now than ever before that the rank and file of the American working class be awakened to the perils that face them in the coming days as the crisis deepens. The existing union leadership has demonstrated its complete incapacity to cope with the capitalist onslaught, even if it were inclined to resist in the first place. If the leadership as represented at these two conventions had any deep appreciation or understanding of the problems confronting them,

they gave no indication of it in their actions. Like the fabled sleeping giant of old, the delegates nodded peacefully while the whole world of free and independent labor organization was crashing all around them.

Superficially, the two conventions represented a study in contrasts. Unlike the hide-bound reactionaries of the A. F. of L., whose primary concern was to maintain an appearance of dignity and respectability, the C. I. O. convention gave off a glow of militancy and genuine concern for labor welfare. Deluded as always by the outward appearance, the so-called "left" press hailed the C. I. O. convention as a giant victory for progressive unionism. For once Stalinists and anti-Stalinists were in accord.

There are none so blind as those who will not see. All the so-called progressive actions taken by the C. I. O. convention were nullified by the pledge of support given by the organization to American imperialism and its "National Defense" program. In this stand the A. F. of L. concurred. This was the most decisive action taken at either convention. By voluntarily embracing the cause of the warmongering profiteers, the organized labor movement has given its worst enemies, the ruling class, the opportunity and the occasion for the destruction of free and independent labor unionism. For the complete "defense" of American imperialism can only be attained through the totalitarian subjection of the workers; and every move made in the past year by the American government, acting for the capitalist class, has been in the direction of totalitarianism.

To be sure, the support of the war plans of the imperialists is linked up with the demands that labor be given a more adequate representation in the "defense" councils and that social gains and labor standards be maintained. Both the C. I. O. and the A. F. of L. conventions adopted vigorous resolutions embodying these demands. But the Roosevelt administration had anticipated them by issuing statements promising that social gains would not be sacrificed. Before the A. F. of L., Secretary of Labor Perkins reiterated this promise. But in the very same address she also called upon labor to be prepared to sacri-

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## *Editorials . . .*

### FASCIST GREECE DEFENDS "DEMOCRACY"

The extension of World War II into Greece and the emergence of the Greek dictator Metaxas as an ally of Great Britain throws a revealing light on the capitalist legend that British imperialism is fighting to preserve "democracy."

British and American imperialists, their agents and their journalist apologists have gone to great lengths to get the working class of the world to accept the idea that Great Britain, in its war against the Axis powers, is waging a sacred crusade against fascism and totalitarianism. Only a short while ago Vice-Premier Attlee declared in the House of Commons that Britain is determined to "establish a peace of free peoples." Many sincere and well-meaning workers have been taken in by these fine phrases and notwithstanding British capitalism's sordid record of imperialist spoilation in the past they believe the ruling class of Great Britain has turned over a new leaf and can be trusted to carry on a bona-fide campaign against fascism.

### STRANGE BEDFELLOWS

But this war for Democracy is certainly creating some strange "Democrats." All last winter Britain and France were vainly trying to win over Mussolini to their side with cajolery and promises. Now we have the spectacle of totalitarian Greece and Dictator Metaxas joining the crusade for "Democracy!" After the oft-repeated British vows to destroy fascism and all its works one would have expected Gen-

eral Metaxas to shun the British and their cause to the same extent that the devil is said to shun holy water. But unlike those misguided workers who have permitted themselves to be roped in by the insidious propaganda of Britain's exploiters, General Metaxas is not fooled by slogans. He knows who are his friends and who his enemies much better than the working class does.

### WHITEWASHING A DICTATOR

To publicize and emphasize the fact that one of the most notorious prototypes of Hitler and Mussolini has embraced the cause of Great Britain would be embarrassing and even harmful to the interests of those who are working with might and main in this country to embroil the nation in the Second World War under the pretext of fighting to preserve our "democratic system."

Furthermore, it would never do to show the Metaxas totalitarian regime in its true light, i.e., as a pawn of British imperialism, interested only in preserving its own power against the assault of the Axis powers, and with no intention whatsoever of restoring democratic rights in Greece, no matter whether they win or lose! For, once the British and American workers begin to see through the "noble" aims and slogans which to date have served to whitewash the war, the imperialist rulers would immediately lose their support and the jig would be up for them.

Our ingenious capitalist apologists have proved quite equal to the occasion, however. By means of their pens and typewriters, and without batting an eye, they have transformed totalitarian Greece and its bloody dictator, Metaxas, into valiant crusaders for "Democracy." With one accord the entire capitalist press hails "gallant" Greece, the Mother of Democracy, which is now fighting to defend all "Democracies," including the United States!

The *New York Times*, which, like other newspapers, had recorded in its columns the rise and development of the Metaxas regime in Greece, its bloody suppression of the Greek trade unions, its ruthless crushing of all political opposition and the establishment of concentration camps with all their horrors, now by editorial legerdemain, suddenly converts the same Greece into a "defender of Democracy." Writing of the Italo-Greek conflict, the *Times* proclaims: "Two forces are at work here: totalitarianism and Democracy." Greece, of

course, is the "Democracy!"

## **GREECE—BRITISH PAWN**

As a secondary bid for the sympathy of the American workers, Greece is cast in the pathetic role of intended victim of aggression by the big bully, Mussolini. But even here the picture is false. To be sure, Mussolini had planned on making a quick job of crushing the Greeks, whose total army numbered less than 200,000 and lacked modern equipment. But Greece was far from being the innocent victim of an unprovoked assault.

From the very beginning Greece has been a pawn of Britain in the Mediterranean. Greece had a long-standing military alliance with Great Britain, which was reaffirmed after the outbreak of the present war. It was not by coincidence that a portion of the British Mediterranean fleet appeared off Greece and seized control of the strategic island of Crete immediately after the Italian invasion. Nor is it an accident that the Royal Air Force has been on hand to play a decisive role in the battle since the very first days of the struggle.

The inescapable fact is that the Greek campaign is part and parcel of a previously

worked-out plan of strategy by the British General Staff and Dictator Metaxas. Mussolini's attempted invasion, regardless of its ultimate success or failure, is but an episode in the larger conflict of the Axis powers against their British imperialist rivals.

## **CAPITALISM BREEDS FASCISM**

The attempt to palm off totalitarian Greece and its dictator as defenders of democracy should serve as an object lesson for those sincere but misguided workers who have permitted their intense hatred of Hitler and fascism to make them easy prey to the capitalist propaganda eyewash that Britain is fighting to destroy Fascism. It should once and for all time demonstrate that neither British imperialism nor its allies in this country, the American ruling class and the capitalist press, can be trusted to carry on a principled struggle against Fascism.

Only the establishment of Socialism by the independent revolutionary action of the working class overthrowing its masters can defeat and crush fascism. Anything less than this means the preservation of the system which breeds and will continue to breed the horrors which we seek to escape.

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## ***The S. U. P. on the Soviet Union***

After an extensive prolonged inner-party discussion, the membership of the Socialist Union Party has by referendum vote adopted a new resolution, reversing its previous position on the Soviet Union.

Heretofore the S. U. P. maintained that the Soviet Union is a bona-fide workers' state, though afflicted with bureaucratic distortions. The new resolution brands the Soviet regime as well as its Stalinist bureaucracy as essentially anti-working class in character, and calls upon the workers of the world to repudiate and withdraw their support from the Soviet Union.

In breaking from its former position, the Socialist Union Party reaffirms its solidarity with the working class of the U. S. S. R. and extends to them its fraternal greetings. The Russian workers are in no wise responsible for the heinous crimes of commission

and omission perpetrated by the Stalinist bureaucracy against the workers of the world.

The S. U. P. pledges its wholehearted support to the struggle against Soviet totalitarianism both within and without the Soviet Union.

## **S. U. P. RESOLUTION ON THE SOVIET UNION**

WHEREAS, the present Soviet totalitarian regime has repudiated and violated in practice the basic concepts of working class solidarity by making common cause with the forces of International Capitalist Imperialism, both democratic and fascist, each in turn, and

WHEREAS, the Soviet totalitarian regime has converted the national sections of the Communist International into its private foreign agents functioning solely to manipulate the

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# The "American" Way

From every side we are being exhorted to protect and defend the "American Way of Life." Using this slogan as a pretext, peacetime conscription has been foisted upon the country for the first time in its history, and complete military regimentation of labor is on tap, awaiting only a renewal of last year's war hysteria to be rushed into law. War preparation measures appropriating 23 billion dollars have been approved by Congress and the administration under cover of the same cry. Finally, in the name of preserving the "American Way," labor is being asked to sacrifice its hard-won gains of the past few years and to lower its standards while the armament patriots are garnering in their billions in guaranteed profits.

Regardless of political differences between them, whether they prefer New Deal or Old Deal, all sections of the capitalist class join hands in proclaiming to high heaven the superiority of the "American Way of Life." In this United Front is to be found, among others, the American Bankers Association which at its recent convention in Atlantic City, dedicated itself to the defense of the "American Way."

## THE NEW AND THE OLD

Just what is this "American Way" which is being lauded so highly? Usually the press describes it as the direct antithesis of Fascist enslavement, the preservation of freedom and political democracy. But the assembled bankers let the cat out of the bag when they defined the "American Way of Life" as meaning "free enterprise in a capitalist economy." In other words, the American Bankers Association wished the protection, defense and preservation of capitalism, the system based on the economic enslavement of the great masses of the nation!

"Free enterprise in a capitalist economy" has "blessed" two-thirds of all American families with annual incomes of \$1500 or less. It has built an army of ten million unemployed, which was hardly ever touched by the increased production caused by the record-breaking war preparations. Yet the bankers call upon the American workers to defend these blessings, and, purely incidentally of course, to protect the international investments and far-flung imperialist interests of the American capitalist class.

Seeking to invest with the sanctity of tra-

dition their desperate attempt to line up the masses behind the defense of capitalism, the journalist apologists for the ruling class invoke the prestige as well as the teachings of the Founding Fathers of the United States. They want to preserve the America bequeathed to us by our Revolutionary forefathers, they say. This claim is an outrageous falsehood.

The truth is that there is not the slightest resemblance between the present-day social order of concentrated and centralized wealth which has despoiled the vast majority of the American people and reduced them to the status of wage slaves, and the America of the Founding Fathers. The pattern of life which the American Revolution sought to establish did not consist merely of political democracy and individual liberty (which are rapidly passing away) but encompassed economic independence and equality of opportunity as well.

## THE AMERICA OF "OUR FATHERS"

The America of 1783 was composed for the most part of a nation of freeholders, independent owners of property, beholden to none for the right to live. Involuntary wage slavery such as exists today was an unknown phenomenon. A virgin continent was at hand and every man with the requisite will and energy had the means and opportunity available to become his own master.

As late as 1861, Lincoln, in his annual message to Congress, could say "The large majority of our people belong to neither class [capitalist or laborer], neither work for others or have others work for them." The wide diffusion of property and the absence of fixed classes in America was looked upon as the surest guarantee of political freedom and democracy.

The freedom and equality of opportunity upon which the Revolutionary Fathers based their nation was historically doomed. Their system of agrarian democracy based upon a community of small and independent producers, each owning his own tools of production, was a fetter on the development and improvement of the means and technique of production. It had to be, and was, supplanted as the price of social progress. Gradually large scale factory production replaced small scale individual industry. With the rise of capitalism came also the concentration and centralization of wealth as

the process of competition permitted the more powerful competitors to drive their weaker rivals out of the economic field.

In due course the gigantic trusts of today made their appearance, speeding up and intensifying the process of concentration and centralization of the nation's wealth. Today we see the result—the great majority of the nation find themselves economically despoiled and propertiless, compelled to sell their labor power to the tiny minority which owns and controls the means of production.

Such was the genius of the Revolutionary Fathers, however, that even while their doomed system was still flourishing, they were able to look deep into the future and foresee the eventual destruction of the agrarian democracy they had set up. James Madison, Father of the Constitution, clearly discerned and traced with unerring precision this coming social revolution. In a masterly little essay written in 1829, "Notes on Suffrage," Madison described the America of his day as having a "precious advantage" over the older European nations in "the actual distribution of property, particularly landed property, and the universal hope of acquired property. . . . There may be at present a majority of the nation who are freeholders, or the heirs or aspirants of freeholders."

Madison went on to point out that this "precious advantage" would not always exist. A day was coming when the majority "shall be without landed property or other equivalent property and without the means of acquiring it." When that day came, warned Madison, the country would be face to face with the danger of "the dependence of an increasing number on the wealth of a few." He continues, "In other countries this relation results, in some from the relation of landlord and tenant, and in others from that source and from the relation of wealthy capitalists and indigent laborers. In the United States the occurrence must happen from the last sources, the connection between the great manufacturers and commerce and the numbers employed by them."

Before concluding this remarkable essay, Madison delivered the following admonition to the future generations of Americans to come: *"To the effects of these changes, moral, social, the institutions and the laws of the country must be adapted; and it will require for the*

*task all the wisdom of the wisest patriots."*

Toward the solution of this problem the Revolutionary Fathers made an epoch-making contribution to political science. Fresh from their experiences with British despotism, they provided theoretically for the legal right of revolution by the constitutional clause providing for the amendment of the Constitution itself. In this clause they sought to make concrete the political sentiment expressed in the Declaration of Independence, which declares "Whenever any form of Government becomes destructive of these ends [Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness] it is the right of the people to alter and abolish it and to institute a new government."

That the establishment of the legal right of the people to revolution was their express intention and desire was confirmed by Abraham Lincoln in his First Inaugural Address when he told the nation: "This country and its institutions belongs to the people who inhabit it. Whenever they shall grow weary of the existing government, they can exercise their constitutional right of amending it, or their revolutionary right to dismember or overthrow it." Thus spoke a real American.

We of the Socialist Union Party solemnly proclaim that American capitalism and its regime of Monopoly-Imperialism has become destructive of the sacred rights of the American people to "Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness." Now, more than ever before, must the working class and all upholders of traditional Americanism, organize to exercise their constitutional right to "alter and abolish" the present existing capitalist government and to establish in its stead the Industrial Republic of Labor, Socialism, which will abolish private ownership in the socially operated means of production and replace it with social ownership and democratic administration of the industries by the useful producers.

While planting ourselves firmly on the Constitutional right of revolution, we of the Socialist Union Party are under no illusions that the capitalist class or its retainers have any respect for their own Constitution when it is invoked against them. History has shown conclusively that no usurping class has ever voluntarily surrendered its power and privileges; nor is there any reason to believe that the American capitalist class will prove to be an exception to the rule. To back up and to



make effective their constitutional guarantees, therefore, the working class must organize its invincible power in the industries. Joined together in an integral industrial union with a revolutionary goal, the working class constitutes a force against which no adversary could successfully stand up.

The triumph of the working class thus organized politically and industrially for the overthrow of capitalism spells the emancipation of

all society from exploitation, war, fascism, unemployment and the myriad of other evils with which capitalism afflicts us. Only such a triumph can make possible the realization of the "American Way of Life" as visualized by the Founding Fathers of the American republic.

The first step towards bringing such a way of life is to join the Socialist Union Party and help create the spearhead of the lance that will pierce the heart of capitalism.

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## Capitalism's "New Order"

Hitler's spectacular Blitzkrieg of the Spring of 1940 in which the Nazi Army overran all of Western Europe served as a tocsin to arouse American capitalism to the dangerous possibility that it is next on Hitler's list. From the moment Hitler's advance showed signs of sweeping all before it, the American ruling class began an intensive campaign to strengthen its defenses. Chief of its immediate objectives is the achievement of "National Unity" or, in plainer words, the suspension of the class struggle by the working class while the government, representing the employers, makes all the necessary preparations to safeguard the imperialist interests of its masters.

### A NEW SPARTA

Crying that if the workers are to escape the fate of their European brothers who have been crushed by fascist enslavement they must forget their 'selfish' class interests, the spokesmen and defenders of capitalism call upon labor to join in the "common sacrifice." What do they mean by their sonorous phrases? Let us examine the words of Miss Dorothy Thompson, well-known political commentator and an outstanding capitalist apologist. In a recent column entitled "The New Order," Miss Thompson gives us a picture of what sacrifices labor will be asked to make.

Pointing out that in the event of a complete victory for Hitler in Europe an attempt will inevitably be made to extend the Nazi "New Order" to the Western Hemisphere, with the United States thus facing the danger of becoming a Nazi colony, Miss Thompson proceeds to draw some strikingly suggestive con-

clusions: "To protect ourselves," she writes, "we, like the Germans, would have to turn this country into a new Sparta—a race of soldiers and administrators — totally abandon, *and abandon for an unforeseeable long future* the comfort-loving world and pleasure-economy standards in which we have been reared; prepare to lose liberalism forever; make ourselves over from start to finish. We would be watching ramparts and doing very little else. . . . We shall not survive the twentieth century as a free people with any of our habits, ideals or ways of life intact, except by an effort *beyond* our means, as we conceive our means at present, an effort that will cost sweat, and pain, and sacrifice, and probably blood."

### THE "AMERICAN WAY" OF LIFE

Before dealing with Miss Thompson's main thesis, it is necessary to emphasize that her allusion to the "pleasure-economy standards" of our "comfort-loving" nation is purely fictitious and gratuitous. With two-thirds of the nation's families compelled to maintain their existence on annual incomes of \$1500 or less, to talk of "pleasure-economy" standards is the most vicious slander, on the same order as the highly imaginative explanation of the fall of France which attributes it to the social gains of Blum's Popular Front, when the truth is that these alleged gains, which to begin with, were only partially carried out, had all been abolished by the Popular Front itself two years before Hitler invaded Poland. But truth is surely not the forte of those who defend capitalism.

## **"ADVANTAGES" OF NAZI ECONOMY**

For the rest, Miss Thompson has sketched a revealing pen picture of the world of tomorrow for labor. But the necessity for such a totalitarian regime does not arise solely from American capitalism's need to defend its interests against the threat of its German rival. Even after it has defeated Hitler it will still retain his system. For, in this period of capitalist decay and disintegration, totalitarian rule possesses immeasurable advantages over the *laissez-faire* capitalism of the past.

Unlike the haphazard way of classic capitalism, the fascist economy does not permit itself the expensive luxury of an army of millions of unemployed; on the contrary, every available pair of hands is harnessed to the industrial-military machine. Unlike its older brother, the fascist economy does not suffer from the dislocations and restrictions of output resulting from the free movement of labor and from strikes, for the turnover of labor is severely regulated when it is not altogether prohibited. Strikes, of course, are outlawed. Nor is the totalitarian economy harassed by Wages and Hours regulations. Under fascism hours are unlimited, with the workers toiling almost until they drop of exhaustion, while wages are arbitrarily manipulated around starvation levels. Finally, the fascist mode of life has the tremendous advantage to capitalism over its "free" rival in that it co-ordinates the entire economic life of the nation into a smoothly-functioning unit, geared to a high level of efficiency for military purposes.

"Democratic" capitalism, lacking these "advantages," cannot meet the threat of the Nazi military machine unless it too sheds its democratic forms and embraces the chief features of the system it professes to condemn. Hence, the cry for "National Unity" and for sacrifices on the part of labor are only the prelude to the imposition of a native fascist regime here. In the language of Dorothy Thompson, the nation would be turned into a "new Sparta—a race of soldiers and administrators—". She conveniently forgot to add that the new Sparta would likewise contain its Helots—its slaves—with the workers doomed to play the role.

## **THE ALTERNATIVES— SOCIALISM OR FASCISM**

Is this the only choice before the American

workers—to accept a fascist yoke of American Imperialist design in preference to Hitler's pattern? (As if there were any substantial difference!) NO, THERE IS ANOTHER WAY OUT — THE ROAD OF DEMOCRATIC SOCIALISM!

To meet and overcome the threat of Fascism's slave economy there is no need for the workers to surrender their liberties, abandon their independent organization or sacrifice their hard-won standards. The real bottleneck in the struggle against Fascism is the capitalist system, which is concerned with production only if profits can be made for the ruling class, and which has turned the great mass of the American people into wage slaves already. The abolition of this pernicious system is the indispensable pre-requisite for the abolition of Fascism both at home or abroad, for Fascism is nothing less than capitalism in degeneracy and decay. As long as it is permitted to survive, capitalism will continue to breed this pestilence.

Socialism, then, is the real way to rid the earth of Hitlerism and all its ugly works. Once freed from the fetters of wage slavery and raised to the dignity of free producers with a real stake in society, the workers will far outstrip the productivity of the most highly developed capitalist industry. A planned Socialist economy will eliminate the vast horde of capitalist drones and non-producers, and utilize to the fullest extent the various technical improvements and new devices which capitalism, in its insatiable greed for profits, now suppresses.

Like a mountain peak over a valley, the new order will tower over the slavish Nazi economy. Before the organized power and might of a Socialist America the threat of worldwide Fascism will melt away. Under capitalism there is no way out for the working class, for capitalism is and can no longer be anything else than the gravedigger of humanity and civilization.

History has confronted Labor with an unavoidable alternative. The old order of capitalist liberalism is doomed. Labor must choose either the road of Democratic Socialism and its new world of freedom, peace and abundance or the capitalist road of retreat and retrogression back to a "new" Sparta—and its vale of sweat, and pain, and sacrifice and blood. There are no other paths.



# ***Labor's Standards in Peril***

## **LABOR STANDARDS IMPERILED**

One of the first effects of the imperialist struggle now raging abroad has been a growing wave of reaction in the United States. With the alleged purpose of helping the British Empire defend democracy, as well as to prepare the "National Defense" the Roosevelt administration has joined hands with big business in sponsoring a stream of undemocratic, reactionary, anti-labor measures. This movement has reached the point where today the real rulers of America, those who control industry, are openly engaged in making a flank attack on the living standards of the working class.

## **SLOAN OPENS ATTACK**

The opening gun in this assault, an attempt to speed up production and to increase the hours of work beyond forty has already been fired by Alfred P. Sloan, Jr., chairman of the General Motors Corporation, one of the most powerful and far-flung business combines in the country. Speaking before a dinner meeting of the Academy of Political Science in New York, with Thomas W. Lamont of J. P. Morgan and Co. presiding, Sloan declared that "Output can be increased twenty per cent by working six days a week in place of five days. It seems clear this should be the first step, if the point is reached when the slack of unemployment has been taken up and the increasing speed of industry has been utilized to the fullest practical extent."

Following the old public relations maxim—"Feed it to 'em in small doses"—Sloan refrained from advocating the immediate extension of the work-week, qualifying his demand with the proviso that it be instituted only "when the slack of unemployment has been taken up." This was designed to take the sting out of Mr. Sloan's proposal and even make it sound superficially reasonable. At the last moment, while delivering his talk, Mr. Sloan softened it up a little more by omitting a section of his prepared manuscript in which he urged that "the penalty for overtime should be cancelled during the emergency to encourage a longer work week." Top capitalism has no intention of waiting until all of the unemployed have jobs! The forty hour week will be on the road to oblivion if the working class permits the employers to escape the "penalty" of overtime wages.

## **LABOR ALONE SACRIFICES**

The spokesmen for business and the "patriotic" politicians are united in calling upon labor to make sacrifices in the name of "national defense." But how about the capitalists themselves, who want the workers to toil and shed their blood in defense of the imperialist interests of the ruling class, are they willing to make sacrifices to preserve their profits and privileges? We know the answer: an emphatic no! They refused to sign contracts to produce planes and munitions for their own "defense" until a law limiting profits was repealed. And the politicians went them one better by passing the fake "Excess-Profits Tax" which not only abolished war-profits limitations, but established tax bases which are designed particularly to enable the armament and war-supply manufacturers to keep a firm grip on a major portion of their excess profits.

## **INCREASED EFFICIENCY —FOR GREATER PROFITS**

"... The defense program," stated Mr. Sloan in his address, "should not be made the occasion for increases in wage rates that can not, generally speaking, be justified. They can be justified economically only if supported by increased efficiency." In other words, only if labor speeds up is it entitled to higher wages. On the other hand, the astronomical rise in the rate of profit can no doubt be justified on the grounds of increased efficiency on the part of the capitalist class—efficiency in fleecing the workers.

According to Mr. Sloan's philosophy the workers are to man the industries, create by their labor airplanes, guns, tanks, ships, uniforms, etc., and turn these products over to their employers, receiving for their services a wage barely enough to live on—the same wage they received before the war crisis. But the employers, for undergoing the tremendous "sacrifice" of permitting the workers to use their factories and machinery for longer hours—factories and machinery, incidentally, which were built by the workers in the first place—are given government contracts at guaranteed, unrestricted profits. Truly this is efficiency with a vengeance!

The present war crisis only intensifies the sacrifices which the propitiless working class

is compelled to make both in peace and wartime. Sloan's arguments against the "calamity" of higher wages are quite revealing in this respect. As a matter of fact, he did not even mean what he said about "increased efficiency" being the only justification for increased wage rates. For, in the very next breath, this spokesman for top capitalism bars the demand for wage increases entirely, no matter how "efficient" the workers may become—except for one contingency. "It is only when the cost of living increases . . . that wage rates should be adjusted to protect living standards. . . ." The workers are to get just enough to keep in working condition; they must not be concerned with their masters' new prosperity, even if it does come out of their own hides.

### **THE WORKERS WILL PAY**

The present campaign to smash labor standards has a twofold purpose: First, it has the object of making the workers pay for the armament program. The huge cost of preparing for war under a policy of unrestricted profits for the capitalist class, will not be paid for out of thin air by the government. On the other hand, it is obvious that the arms manufacturers themselves are not paying its cost—they are cashing in on the "emergency." Thus it is clear that the cost of "defense" will be borne chiefly by the capitalists in "non-defense" industries, who have no fabulous government contracts, and by the workers.

Already, Congress has reduced the exemptions from income taxation so that every unmarried individual earning more than \$15.40 per week is subject to taxation, thus creating a new burden for thousands of workers. The present attempt to lengthen the work week represents another move to shift a major portion of the cost of building the war machine onto the backs of the working class. It is significant that at the very same dinner where Mr. Sloan made his pleas for longer hours in "defense" industries, Professor Sumner H. Schlichter of Harvard University asked for modification of the Wages and Hours Law to permit a 48 hour week in "non-defense" industries! And this after he had admitted that he did not expect the "defense" program to absorb more than half of the unemployed, which he estimated at 8,000,000 to 8,500,000! The longer work week, with "no penalty for overtime" will cancel out whatever increased taxes the

bosses will have to pay for the defense of their system.

### **LABOR MUST RESIST**

The second purpose of the present campaign to reduce labor's standards and to intensify exploitation is the long-range aim of strengthening industry's hand in unbridled competition with its foreign rivals for world markets. In the long run this can only be done by reducing the American working class to a status approaching that of coolies. The only way United States capitalism can compete with its Japanese, German and Italian rivals is by becoming Fascist itself.

Against these attempts on the part of industry and government to take away the bitterly fought-for standards of labor there is but one answer. The workers in both "defense" and "non-defense" industries must unite in solid lines of resistance to any attempts to lengthen their hours or speed up production.

The Socialist Union Party calls upon the workers to close ranks against this threat from the profit-mad capitalist class. Neither labor-faker leadership nor false cries of "national defense" should be permitted to sway the workers from the job of defending their living standards from attack. Only a strong and militant working class, not one which permits itself to be dragged down to the level of coolies, can hope to be free.

### **HOW CANADA FIGHTS HITLERISM**

OTTAWA, Nov. 18 (CP). — Instead of making democracy effective so far as the workers are concerned, everything possible is being done for the protection of those exploiting the workers, Clarence Gillis, Co-operative Commonwealth Federation member from Nova Scotia, charged today in the House of Commons.

He cited specifically several instances of what he termed "Hitler tactics" by employers. Most recently General Motors at Oshawa, Ont., had asked to be declared a specially protected place. In a dispute at the Chrysler plant at Windsor, Ont., "all the tactics of Hitler" had been applied, he said. On the day of a strike vote, he said, police had been placed outside the union hall and soldiers had been marched through the factory to intimidate the workers.



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fice! The same plea was also made by Secretary of War Stimson.

In the face of the war needs of the ruling class the attempt to preserve existing standards, not to speak of extending them, is a well-nigh impossible task. But the organized labor movement has already forfeited its right to wage the struggle in the first place by its support of the imperialist moves of the American government. Once the premise is accepted that the interests of the capitalist class and its government are a legitimate concern of the workers, then considerations of "National Defense" become paramount, before which all other demands must give way, including the maintenance of labor standards. Organized labor cannot blow both hot and cold on the same question. If the workers have a stake in the security of American capitalism, they cannot consistently haggle over "minor" details in a period of "vital danger" to that security.

There are no two ways about it: the defense of American capitalism demands the sacrifice of existing labor standards. Only by emulating its Nazi rivals and adopting a totalitarian pattern of its own can American imperialism hope to emerge victorious from the clash. Once the workers are sufficiently "softened up" by the war pressure of their canny exploiters this fact will be made clear to them, and all this "foolishness" about "maintaining labor standards" will be put down with

### **"LABOR" REPRESENTATION**

Equally fallacious and illusive is the proposition that adequate labor representation on "Defense Councils" is capable of protecting labor's interests. Both conventions were vociferous in demanding increased recognition on such bodies.

What are these "Defense Councils" and what is the function of a "labor" representative on them? They constitute an arm of the capitalist governmental machinery charged with the task of unifying and strengthening the war preparedness efforts of the ruling class. The function of "labor" representatives is to dragoon the workers into making the necessary sacrifices that such efforts require for success.

At the present time labor is "represented" on the National Defense Advisory Commission by Sidney Hillman, president of the

Amalgamated Clothing Workers Union. How successful Hillman has been in his allotted task is revealed by the results accomplished: In the last 5 months his division has intervened in 210 labor disputes. No stoppages took place in 100 of these cases and in most of the others the interruption of work was for but a few hours or a few days. According to the capitalist press Hillman has been much more effective than his predecessors in the First World War.

But, although he has been eminently successful in maintaining uninterrupted war materials production, labor's "representative" has not been quite so successful in protecting the interests of the workers. The collapse of Hillman's much-heralded policy of barring violators of the Wagner Act and the Walsh-Healy Law from participating in government "defense" contracts is ample evidence of the futility of such "representation."

On October 2nd Hillman created a sensation by announcing that labor law violators would henceforth be debarred from obtaining government orders. He backed up his statement with supporting letters from Secretary of the Navy Knox and Assistant Secretary of War Patterson. In a few days he was further strengthened by an opinion from Attorney General Jackson, holding that government agencies must accept as final, until they are reversed by the courts, all N. L. R. B. decisions against employers.

Here was a notable victory for labor organization indeed! The government was actually going to support labor against such flagrant labor law violators and union-busting outfits as Bethlehem Steel, Standard Oil, Du Pont, General Motors and Ford! But disillusionment was quick to follow. No sooner was Hillman's pronouncement published than it was greeted by a storm of criticism and protest from the capitalist class. The press raised hysterical howls about "impairing" and "endangering" the "national defense" if the government refused to deal with law violating corporations. In Congress the watchdogs of the ruling class sprang into immediate action.

A meeting of the House Labor Committee was hastily summoned to probe to the bottom this dastardly conspiracy to enforce the existing laws. Assistant Secretary of War Patterson, the first witness to be called, quickly reneged on his assurance to Hillman. He told the

Committee that the War Department was chiefly interested in getting production quickly, and that a company's labor policy was "only one factor to be considered." If all other factors were favorable, he stated, a company would be awarded a contract regardless of its labor policies. Secretary Knox of the Navy subscribed 100% to Patterson's statement.

### **HILLMAN "BACKS WATER"**

When Hillman finally was called he was asked point-blank whether he agreed with the position stated by Patterson and Knox. "I've got to agree," he replied. "The Army and Navy have the power. Questions of all kinds come up every day, requiring sensible and constructive solutions. In every case the first consideration is whether it will help or harm national defense." The reporters and the public present were astounded. Of all the reversals and reneging, Hillman's was the most startling. Only a week before he had been positive and confident that his announced policy would be adopted.

Hillman's lament, "I've got to agree; the army and navy have the power," reveals far more than the bootlicking posture of a subservient labor lieutenant of the capitalist class. It exposes the futility of depending on the machinery of the capitalist state for the protection of the interests of the working class. Additional "labor representation" on the Defense Councils will only mean more Hillmans earning the plaudits of capitalism for exceptional work in lining up the workers for capitalist "defense" or earning their displeasure for failing to do so.

### **CAPITALISM MUST GO**

There is only one way for labor to protect its interests effectively—yes, to ward off the certain fate of fascist enslavement that is rapidly closing in upon it. Labor must retrace its steps and break completely with capitalism and its "defense." Labor has no stake in the preservation of the capitalist system. Its only hope lies in establishing its own rule by the expropriation of the means of production and their democratic administration under the Industrial Republic of Labor—Socialism.

The two labor conventions which met in November were failures, from the standpoint of the real interests of the working class, because they continued to support the rotting and collapsing system which in its death throes threatens to destroy the working class too. Only in the degree that the labor movement

rids itself of this capitalist orientation can it hope to survive and make progress. The task of the class conscious worker is to point out the limitations of capitalist unionism and the imperative necessity of converting the existing unions into fighting organs of proletarian emancipation.

## **S.U.P. AND SOVIET UNION**

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domestic labor movement to serve the exigencies of its anti-working class foreign policy, and

WHEREAS, the treasonable conduct of the Soviet totalitarian regime in rendering aid and comfort to the camp of Fascist Imperialism, and the concurrent conduct of its national puppet sections in subordinating the domestic labor movement to its foreign policy, has created a widespread demoralization within the ranks of labor and strengthened the forces of capitalist reaction, and

WHEREAS, the Soviet totalitarian regime has completely enslaved the Russian toiling masses under an iron and brutal rule of terrorism, which in no manner differs from Fascist enslavement of the working class, and

WHEREAS, the Soviets, trade unions and all other organizations of the Russian working class have been completely emasculated, all power being now vested in the apparatus of the Soviet Totalitarian State, and

WHEREAS, certain apologists for the present existing Soviet totalitarian state attempt to make a distinction between the government, which is to be condemned out of hand as unworthy of working class support, and the Soviet State itself which they speciously argue rests upon a basis of Socialist economy and as such must be supported against the attacks of International Capitalist Imperialism, be it hereby

RESOLVED, that the Socialist Union Party rejects the concept that the Soviet Union is a workers' state based upon a Socialist economy, the Soviet economy being no more Socialist in character than the state-controlled economy of fascism or government ownership, and be it further

RESOLVED, that there is no distinction to be made between the avowed capitalist imperialist states and the Soviet totalitarian state, both being essentially anti-working class in character.